

[HOUSE BILL.]

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 5, 1864.—Read first and second times, placed upon the calendar, and ordered to be printed.

[By Mr. MILES, from the Military Committee.]

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A BILL

To be entitled An Act to increase the efficiency of the army by the employment of free negroes and slaves in certain capacities.

1       Whereas, the efficiency of the army is greatly diminished  
2 by the withdrawal from the ranks of able-bodied soldiers to act  
3 as teamsters, and in various other capacities in which free ne-  
4 groes and slaves might be advantageously employed; therefore,

1       SEC. 1. *The Congress of the Confederate States of America do*  
2 *enact*, That all male free negroes resident in the Confederate  
3 States, between the ages of eighteen and fifty years, shall be  
4 held liable to perform such duties with the army, or in connection  
5 with the military defences of the country, in the way of work  
6 upon fortifications, or in Government works for the production  
7 or preparation of material of war, or in military hospitals, as the  
8 Secretary of War may from time to time prescribe; and while  
9 engaged in the performance of such duties shall receive rations

10 and clothing, and compensation at the rate of eleven dollars a  
 11 month, under such rules and regulations as the said Secretary  
 12 may establish: *Provided*, That the Secretary of War, with the  
 13 approval of the President, may exempt from the operations of  
 14 this act such free negroes as the interests of the country may  
 15 require should be exempted, or such as he may think proper to  
 16 exempt on grounds of justice, equity, or necessity.

1     SEC. 2. *Be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of War is  
 2 hereby authorized to employ for duties similar to those indicated  
 3 in the preceding section of this act, as many male negro slaves,  
 4 not to exceed \_\_\_\_\_, as, in his judgment, the  
 5 wants of the service may require, furnishing them while so  
 6 employed with proper rations and clothing, under rules and  
 7 regulations to be established by him, and paying to the owners  
 8 of said slaves wages at the rate of eleven dollars per month for  
 9 their use and service, and in the event of the loss of any slaves,  
 10 while so employed, by the act of the enemy, or by escape to the  
 11 enemy, or by death inflicted by the enemy, or by disease  
 12 incurred, in consequence of the discharge of any service required  
 13 of said slaves, then the owners of the same shall be entitled to  
 14 receive the full value of such slaves, to be paid under such rules  
 15 and regulations as the Secretary of War may establish.

1     SEC. 3. *Be it further enacted*, That when the Secretary of War  
 2 shall be unable to procure the services of slaves in any military

3 department in sufficient numbers for the necessities of the  
4 department upon the terms and conditions set forth in the  
5 preceding section, then he is hereby authorized to impress the  
6 services of as many male slaves as may be required from time  
7 to time to discharge the duties indicated in the first section of  
8 this act, under such rules and regulations as the said Secretary  
9 may establish: *Provided*, That slaves so impressed shall, while  
10 employed, receive the same rations and clothing in kind and  
11 quantity as slaves regularly hired from their owners, and in the  
12 event of their loss, shall be paid for in the same manner, and  
13 under the same rules and regulations as those who may have  
14 been hired.

